

## **FAQS – returning to school in August**

Last updated 24 July

### **How are we supporting youth work now that the Scottish Government says it can take place?**

Current Scottish Government guidance states the only face-to-face youth work that is allowed is work that takes place outdoors and with safe practices in place. Further Scottish Government advice and guidance was published on Monday 20 July on a gradual phasing of youth work indoors and this will inform the re-introduction of youth work in Council buildings as resources allow.

### **What is happening with After School Clubs and Breakfast Clubs?**

These should be able to resume when schools re-open. A small number of people use non-school Council owned settings and work is underway to allow these premises to be in use as soon as possible.

### **What support is being offered for children with additional support needs?**

Since schools closed in March we have introduced a number of services to support children and young people with additional support needs. This included children and young people going to school hubs at three special schools and Forest Schools. We also commissioned a number of additional support services and continued residential respite services and outreach services. In the summer holidays we have a special school hub at Braidburn, other support hubs and Forest Schools.

As we prepare for schools re-opening we are continuing to work with our third sector partners. Some additional services will continue in the forthcoming school session to support transition to school and to provide additional supports and activities.

Some children, including children with additional support needs or a high level of vulnerability, may need more support to return to school or early learning and childcare. In these circumstances, the child's school will be in touch with parents/carers direct to discuss how best to support their return to school. The ASL Service and Psychological Services will work with schools to plan support for children with more complex needs. Parents will be included in the planning process for their child and will be consulted at each stage of the plan.

### **What is the current position on physical distancing in schools with a 100% return model?**

The Scottish Government has concluded (16th July) that - subject to continued suppression of the virus and to surveillance and mitigations being in place - the balance of the evidence suggests that no distancing should be required between children in primary schools. The evidence is less clear for secondary schools but at present the Government would support the same approach being taken in secondary schools on the basis of the balance of known risks and the effectiveness of mitigations.

In both primary and secondary settings, the preference would always be to avoid large gatherings and crowded spaces and, wherever possible, to keep children and

young people within the same groups for the duration of the school day. Where possible, timetabling should be reviewed to reduce movement of groups of pupils around the school as much as possible. However, movement around corridors is less likely to result in transmission than is a large gathering in a single enclosed space (such as an assembly hall).

The general guidance about the maximum size of gatherings allowed in Scotland would provide a suitable benchmark for the advisable maximum size of a single group activity within a school at the time of re-opening. The Government concludes that, on balance, two metre distancing should remain in place wherever possible between adults, and between adults and children who are not from the same household.

### **How will school transport be affected in August?**

The Scottish Government has indicated (16 July) that dedicated school transport should be regarded as an extension of the school estate and physical distancing measures between pupils are not necessary (subject to continued low levels of infection within Scotland). The Scottish Government recognises that school transport will involve mixed age groups of pupils but still considers the risk of transmission to be acceptably low when mitigations are in place.

### **What about children/young people who get to school on public transport?**

The Scottish Government's current position (16 July) is that, where public transport (including buses, taxi, trams, subway, trains, ferries and air) is required for school-aged children to attend school, the general advice and guidance from the Government and Transport Scotland should be followed. This currently includes the mandatory use of face coverings and physical distancing where possible.

### **If I do not want my child to return to school, what should I do?**

We understand that some parents may want their child to continue to learn from home. You can find out more about [home education here](#).

### **What is the cleaning regime in Council schools?**

We will clean our schools using a combination of electrostatic cleaning and regular surface cleaning, involving the use of Milton bleach. Edinburgh Scientific Services has approved electrostatic cleaning which provides a dry negative charged chemical that bonds around surfaces. The chemical used releases free oxygen radicals that attacks, for example, viral membrane.

There will also be a bottle of detergent, paper hand towels and wipes to clean devices in each classroom.